DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 346 UD 024 615

AUTHOR Wallace, William J.
TITLE The Impact of Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, on West Virginia State College.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 20p.; In: Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka: An Assessment Thirty Years Later (Institute, West Virginia, February 10-11 and April 11-13, 1984). For proceedings, see UD 024 606.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Black Colleges; *Desegregation Effects; Enrollment; Higher Education; *Racial Integration; Racial Relations; *School Desegregation
IDENTIFIERS *West Virginia State College

ABSTRACT

This paper, by the former president of West Virginia State College (WVSC), responds to criticisms that racial integration following the Brown decision has had a negative impact on the quality of the school. Statistics are presented to show that West Virginia State's enrollments were declining seriously at the time of the Brown decision, and that they improved drastically afterwards. Brown changed WVSC from an institution that appealed to the national community to one that now served principally the local community and from a college having an all-resident student body to one having a large number of (mostly white) part-time students. Next, the decline in black enrollment since Brown is acknowledged, and some tensions between black and white students are described. However, the majority of black members of the faculty and staff have found they could continue to function within the new environment. Some of the plans made by school officials to prepare for the predicted influx of white students after Brown are discussed anecdotally. The paper concludes by asserting the school's commitment to racial equality and togetherness, yet holds out the hope that the WVSC's origins as a black college will not become invisible. (KH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Thomas W. Cole, Jr
West Virginia State College

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED264346

THE IMPACT OF BROWN V. THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF TOPEKA, KANSAS ON WEST VIRGINIA STATE COLLEGE

William J. Wallace
President Emeritus
West Virginia State College

Presented at the Symposium celebrating Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court Decision of 1954 (Institute, WV, February 10-11 and April 11-13, 1984)-

UD 024 615

The Impact of Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas on West Virginia State College

William J. L. Wallace, President Emeritus
West Virginia State College

Does anyone have a valium? Perhaps two would be better. I don't feel a bit like being very polite this morning, at this time. I've never listened to such poor scholarship in all my life. I don't know who that person was, who was employed by the Board of Control, to solicit the presence and attendance of students, white students on this campus. There is no one, and I assure you no one, that was appointed to this staff that I did not recommend. I was the president of this college. The Board of Education, the Board of Regents, the Governor nor anyone else was the President of West Virginia State College when I was here, and I take the sole responsibility for everything that was done in this institution from December 1, 1952 to June 30, 1973.

But I'm very pleased to be here to participate on this program. I've related the ties with the College. I also have a very thrilling experience and ties with the Mountain State Bar Association, not directly, but with the West Virginia State Bar Association. I'm one of three non-lawyers who are members of the Legal Ethics Committee of the West Virginia State Bar. I represent Central West Virginia. I'm in my second term, second three year term of membership on that committee. So I know something about the negative aspects of the profession of law, but it has been my great privilege to work with some of the great lawyers in this state. It has been a learning experience. And not only there, but in all of the other activities that I've engaged in over the years.

I was not only president of West Virginia State College, but I was one of those persons that sought to become not only integrated here, but in all the activities of this state. I've been on parks and recreation and design programs for

recreation in our parks. I've been on the Welfare Advisory Board to the welfare association, the welfare department. I was appointed one of the representatives for West Virginia on the Education Commission of the States, which was a national organization. I served in the highest position on that that a non-governor could. I was vice-president of that association, and received a medal of awards for my contributions there. I've served with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra as president of that board and a member of it for a long time. I've served with senior citizens. At the present time, I am the chair of the Kanawha County Library Association. On that committee is the president of the West Virginia Bar Association, Attorney Kaufelt. And I have working with me on that committee, because it's always been my effort and attempt to bring Blacks, other Blacks, upon these committees. Dr. Shirley Hairston is an active member of the Library Board. It took a little time for us to get a second Black member on a board of eighteen, and now perhaps we're working on, say an additional member. One of the top salaried persons on the library staff is Black; she and I have to work some--we have to respond to arguments from time to time about that, there are still some, you know, little feelings about some of these things, but she is very competent.

And I say all that to say that while I'm not a sociologist or psychologist, I know how things are operated in this country of ours, and one of the things I want to emphasize this morning is that, if we are going to make progress in equal opportunity, for all people, in this country, we've got to get together, and know one another. I know we have all of these rules and regulations about appointments, but ladies and gentlemen, in America, friendship and knowledge of people still count as an important factor in getting access to the power controls in this country. You've got to know people. Blacks have got to know whites. And one of the strong points of this institution is that it affords an opportunity for

young Blacks and older ones, too, to get to know white people, and white people to know Black people. I believe that, and all who don't, and who bemoan with crocodile tears yesterday, read James Dent's column this morning, in The Charleston Gazette. He talks about the critics of the nice clean streets in Williamsburg, which is a replica of the olden days and some critics say it isn't vintage. You don't have any pigs running around, you don't have any privies. You see, you don't have any other animals and the smells, the sounds and the smells and there was another term there, oh yes, and the sights of Old Williamsburg, yeah. Well, he says, who wants that except these pure critics?

Who wants to go back to the days of segregation? I don't. I have had more disappointments, more obstacles put in my way, more denials. My father and my brother and myself narrowly escaped death in the East St. Louis riot of 1917. We had to flee like mad from downtown. The printing shop which he had built up to go on a new adventure to establish the Western Star of Zion for our church was destroyed with all of its equipment. And after that riot not a single white person was ever put on trial, all Blacks. And Dr. Leroy Bundy, a dentist, an undertaker, a car salesman was convicted and sentenced to death three times for attempting to get ammunition using the hearses that he had to take ammunition from St. Louis over to East St. Louis, you see, to protect Black people who were being murdered and their homes being destroyed, convicted three times and sentenced to death. Finally, Governor Louden commuted his sentence and sent him off to Cleveland where he became active in politics in Cleveland.

I entered the University of Pittsburgh and in my junior year I enrolled in the ROTC program. The professor of Military Science and Tactics called me in to say, Wallace, you cannot be admitted to this course. There was a captain, now he was from Minnesota, that bears out something that was said last night about north and south. A captain, who heard this, called me to his office, he said come

down, I want to talk to you and I didn't know what he was going to say, but he said, "Wallace, the University cannot keep you, deny your registering this course for credit, and you do that and then I've got forms here, you apply and send your notice, your letter to General MacArthur who is in command of the Third Corps area and let him decide. True," he said, "this is Coast Artillery and there are no Negroes in it, but you go ahead." And I did. It took a year or so. The Major lost some ranks--in his promotion ranks. It wasn't because he denied me, but he mishandled the case. He wasn't slick enough or shrewd enough to keep me from getting in, but that went all the way to President Coolidge and I was admitted. Of course, I didn't get into the Coast Artillery for some other reasons I won't repeat here. But things like that, denied opportunities, when simply on the basis of the fact that I was colored.

One other instance, a personal reference, I just have to tell these things in response to these things that were said this morning. I had the privilege of being educated through the first eleven grades in an all segregated school. That was fine; I had some fine leaders, and I had some very poor teachers, too. You know, nowadays they talk about all the excellent Black teachers of yesteryear. They've forgotten about the rascals and the poor teachers that we had. I moved on to Pittsburgh to the integrated school, Alleghany High School, in Pittsburgh, and I was told, "You will never graduate from here in a year." Well, I entered a physics class. I was making A's in physics. I had a very fine mathematical background from East St. Louis from a Negro teacher who was very outstanding, not only in his knowledge of math, but in his teaching ability, making all A's. So one day, the teacher said to me, after he'd assigned me to tutor some other students in the class, and he said, "Wallace, which one of your parents is Chinese?" "Chinese," I said, "I'm colored." "Oh!" From that day, I got only C's and the dirtiest thing that ever was done to me was that my mother was an

awful fighter, she was a tremendous fighter. She argued. She went down; we met her in the door of her classroom, and she stood there and marked a "B" on my card and never turned it into the office. Never!

Now, you tell me that I want to go back to those kinds of days, that segregated pattern of living, where we were considered to be inferior and different. It has been my privilege in West Virginia to associate with people. While there are some rac...I am racist too, in many regards, you know. It's hard to get this all out at once, you see, it's going to take some time. But, we've got to work on it.

Now, a number of papers and reports and newspaper articles have been written regarding the dramatic changes that began to take place at West Virginia State College in May of 1954. Among these are, I'm sorry that these terms were used in the opposite sense today, "Reverse Integration" by Ernst and Calloway. Now, Mr. Ernst was a reporter and staff member of The Charleston Gazette. Calloway was our professor of Education and was our public relations man beginning in 1953. As a matter of fact, one of the first things I did, I was told that it was very foolish. Calloway was Superintendent of Negro Schools in Kanawha County and he was a writer for The Pittsburgh Courier. He protested the inequality of faculties for Negroes in Kanawha County. Well, the Board said, "They're equal. We give you the same per capita allowance as for whites." "But," Calloway said, "our laboratories in the chemistry department don't have any test tubes, we don't have any burners, we don't have any chemicals, we don't have this course and that course." "Well," they said, "but it's equal. We gave you the same amount of money per capita. But there were so few Black students in comparison with whites, naturally we didn't have any money." So his protest didn't cease and he continued, you see, and they eventually demoted him and demoted him. Finally, he had to leave the county. He hadnt' been gone but three or four months before I brought him

back and he was one of the finest persons, one of the greatest persons in pushing the programs of this college.

Another publication was, "A Living Laboratory in Human Relations" by Bill Francois who was assistant professor of journalism at Marshall University; and that was published in the Saturday Review. By the way, "Reverse Integration" was published by the New York Times Magazine, January 8, 1957. The other articles are "Integration in Reverse at West Virginia State College" by Elizabeth C. and James A. Duran, Jr. in 1976 and "Monument to Equality" by L. T. Anderson published Tuesday, September 27, 1977 in The Charleston Gazette.

Newspaper reports have appeared in The Detroit Free Press and The Washington Post, the former by a reporter who came to the campus to interview many persons and the latter by a newspaper correspondent who delivered a lecture here on campus. There are many others I am told, all offering their opinions about events happening on this campus during the period 1954-1975.

I also cite the Statement of Representative John M. Slack published in the Congressional Record-Extension of Remarks for February 7, 1973. If the personal references are omitted there remain some general evaluations of the twenty years and seven months of my tenure as President of this College.

Representative Slack wrote, "On June 1, 1953, Dr. Wallace was appointed president of what was then a state-supported all-Black college. The following year the Supreme Court ruling ended segregation in public institutions of higher education. During the intervening years he has presided over the gradual transformation of the college from an all-Black institution into a fully integrated facility prominently placed to influence all phases of life in the community."

Of course, I must point out that full integration was not achieved. However, a very good beginning was made, and when I left on June 30, 1973, I had every reason to be optimistic about the future not only for the college but for our

community in so far as race relations and the participation of Blacks in the total life of our community.

I have been disappointed that revelations of experiences and evaluations by members of the faculty and staff have not been written by members of the faculty and staff who were more intimately involved in the everyday victories and defeats in bringing about racial harmony and understandings on this campus. The Ernst and Calloway observations mentioned the involvement of Dean Harrison H. Ferrell in reaching acceptable agreements in controversial situations. Dr. Ferrel simply continued doing that which he had been doing as faculty member, as Registrar and Dean of Academic Affairs the previous twenty-six years, 1928-54. It is said, and he did not deny it, that he remembered the name of every student who had been in his office, and particularly if that student had had an academic problem, or wished to talk to him about other matters. Friendliness was his characteristic and this was a quality we emphasized particularly during the early years of the new era at West Virginia State College.

The Deans of Student Affairs had particularly difficult jobs during that period. Dean James Kelly will on the program discussing the future. No doubt he will mention some of his experiences that he thinks important. He was Dean of Men. Willie P. Russell was Dean of Women. Another staff person who can contribute much to the evaluation of the impact of Brown is Dr. Jack Yeager, now Dean at the College of Graduate Studies, but who was Dean of Men and later Dean of Students during the exceedingly difficult period surrounding the murder of Martin Luther King, Attica, and the immense opposition to the Vietnam War, especially by our young people. There was the spirit of revolt which filled the hearts of some young Black students who were convinced that they had to express, in some violent way, their lack of hope in America, the shattering of their dreams, by the slowness of the realization of the freedoms they thought they had been promised.

Under the leadership of Dean Yeager, with the cooperation of student government officers, Black and white, this campus survived. We built a building for the R.O.T.C. Program toward the end of my term, when other institutions were burning theirs down. The spiritual impact of Brown was brought to light when Blacks and whites brought together by critical situations overcame antagonisms and created positive results. The spirit created here spread to the community and Black faces began to appear in offices and work places where it had been said that they would never be found. I will never forget the day that Silas Pickering who was Director of Personal Affairs at Union Carbide said to Professor Paul J. Moore and Julius Thomas who was one of the top Urban League Officers, and he said to us, "It will never happen. Union Carbide will never appoint any Negroes above those of janitorships in this industry. We have too fine a labor market here of poor whites who are perfectly content and we are not going to disturb them."

There were some misinterpretations of events on this campus. Soon after the news of the death of Martin Luther King, leaders of the Human Rights Commission attempted to take over the campus. I was amazed that anyone was going to take over the campus from me, on the premise that we could not protect the Black students. The implied threat was non-existant. We didn't have any white students who wanted to attack Black students. As a matter of fact, it was just the other way around. We had a group of Black students who wanted to make war on Dunbar. I stood over there in the College Union that evening and argued with them and finally through some humorous situations, pointed out to them. One fellow was staggering around and I said, "If you want to shoot at someone, you ought to reflect upon that you couldn't hit the side of a barn the way you are now with a shotgun." That brought a lot of laughter and the tension disappeared.

The Commission leaders had to be reminded that on this campus were Black and white students and all of them were vital to our operation, being involved in our programs and plans. By that time, 1968, we had had fourteen years to develop some kind of spirit on this campus.

I must not go on to another aspect of life at West Virginia State College 1954-73 without mentioning again Dean Yeager. On the occasion of Armed Forces Day in the early seventies, a General of the Army was on the platform of what is now Ferrell Hall, when a group of faculty and students and outsiders demonstrated by disturbing the assembly. On the third and last time that I intervened, I announced with loud tones, "Dean Yeager, proceed with the plan we agreed upon to handle this situation." Whereupon the Dean remarked, "Who needs enemies when I have a friend like you."

The experiences we encountered during this period indicated to me that Black students had entered the main stream of events. All over the country these situations were developing. Black students were entering the big tent, leaving the confines of the side shows in our national life. They were being accepted.

In my opinion, the most striking evidence of the impact of Brown upon West Virginia State College is in the enrollment figures. I hated to do this. Dr. Davis was a great man but he misinterpreted the trends at times. Full time enrollment as of September 30th in each case that I have chosen to demonstrate the effect is as follows:

1945-46	851
1946-47	1391
1947-48	1788

There was a period of rapid growth following World War II. The big increases in enrollment led to a conflict with Dr. Davis, the president of the college. At that time, I was Administrative Assistant to the President. I asked the question,

"Are we educating students or building buildings?" I was prompted by the fact that we were not able to provide comfortable living accomodations for our students. The reputation we gained during this period for mistreating and miseducating students remained with us for a long time, and I believe was a predominate factor in the relative small enrollments on campus, following us through the sixties and even after the opening of Sullivan Hall. Prillerman and Hill Halls were constructed and opened but their capacities were insufficient to meet the demand. Dr. Davis replied to my question by saying that, "We must build buildings to educated students." End of argument.

A second trend I call to your attention. Figures giving the full time enrollment beginning in the school year 1948-49 are:

1948-49	1601
1949-50	1415
1950-51	1264
1951-52	994
1952-53	889
1953-54	831

You see this is one of the reasons why I said that was false scholarship, which the previous speaker mentioned here. We were a failing institution when we were an all Negro institution. They were dropping. That's a lot different than having an institution which is succeeding, and then you see, adding other students to it. This is quite a different picture. And when I realized this drop in enrollment, and as Administrative Assistant, I should have known something about that...But I was involved in a lot of other figures with regards to what the government owed us in terms of their allowances and so on. An so it escaped me. But when I woke up to find out that I was appointed the President of a dying institution, I became concerned. Why did I do this? This was a period of rapid decline. The enrollment in September, 1953 was only 51.9 percent of that of September, 1947. When I assumed office as Acting President in December, 1952

we actually had 793 students. We did make a great effort that year and did increase the enrollment to 831 in 1953.

Then the magic years began. I don't understand some people. They seemed to think that I should have stood in the door like Wallace of Alabama did and say, "No, no, no! You can't come in here." Here I have an opportunity to build a career, and somebody expects me to say, "No, no no! You shouldn't do that. You should remember the race." So I said, "Here, I've got a chance," and I knew I had a chance because white students had been on this campus. One of the first things that a reporter from The Charleston Gazette said to me was, "Dr. Wallace, don't tell me that white students haven't been on this campus. I understand that you have said that. All of our staff at the Gazette in the printing department have been in printing classes on this campus. And they were all white."

Well, in 1954 the magic years began:

1954-55	906	
1955-56	1226	increase of 35%
1956-57	1698	increase of 38%
1957-58	1728	increase of 2.0%
1958-59	1899	increase of 9.9%

In a period of four years recovery of enrollment was more than complete since in 1958-59 the number of students exceeded the highest enrollment in the segregated years--1788.

The data cited is sufficient to establish the conclusion that the impact of Brown was to make West Virginia State College a dynamic, growing college rather than a dying one.

Why was this happening to us? And this is where I think scholarship should have been investigated. In the early fifties the mechanization of the mines in the coal mining industry led to a large loss of population in the state. Some whites found compensatory employment in the growing chemical industry. But that industry, at that time, was closed to Blacks. Thus it seemed inevitable that the enrollment would continue to decrease.

In addition, the out-of-state enrollment began to decline. In 1953, 408 of the 831 equated full time students were out-of-state students, 49.1 percent of the enrollment. This was a decline from previous years. The state of West Virginia had been very gracious with us. I could have cited some figures which have shown that there were years in which 60 percent of our students were from out-of-state, and that's a kind of no-no. West Virginia frowned on educating large numbers of students from other states. We dropped considerably from that and there was a reason. The southern states from which we drew many students were increasing financial support of the segregated colleges. In the school year 1960-61 records show 215 of 1235 equated full time students as out-of-staters, a percentage of 17.4.

Quoting from my Biennial Report of 1960-62, the data "indicates that the full time enrollment was 82.6 percent West Virginian in 1960 and 80.6 percent in 1961." I concluded, "It is desirable that about 20% of the full time enrollment should be from out-of-state. When the large number of part time students is added to the full time enrollment the implication is clear that the service area of West Virginia State College is primarily the local geographical community."

Let us look at some figures which support the last statement. These two tables point to three conclusions:

1. The percent of the enrollment of students from out-of-state had decreased from 49.1 percent in 1953 to 17.4 percent in 1960. There was an increase to 19.4 in 1961.
2. The percent of Kanawha County students increased from 32.7 percent in 1953 to 76.4 percent in 1961.
3. The part time enrollment increased from 10 students in 1953 to 727 in 1961.

TABLE I

YEAR	FULL-TIME STUDENT ENROLL-MENT	ENROLL-MENT FROM WV	ENROLL-MENT FROM KANAWHA COUNTY	% OF WV ENROLL-MENT FROM KANAWHA COUNTY	ENROLL-MENT FROM OTHER STATES	% OF STUDENTS FROM OTHER STATES	NUMBER OF FOREIGN STUDENTS
1953	830	419	137	32.7	408	49.1	3
1954	859	516	258	50.0	340	39.6	3
1955	1076	764	496	64.9	307	28.5	5
1956	1285	1024	761	74.3	254	19.8	7
1957	1275	1002	746	74.4	265	20.8	8
1958	1514	1211	926	76.4	295	19.5	8
1959	1344	1091	804	73.7	245	18.2	8
1960	1235	1010	742	73.4	215	17.4	10
1961	1416	1125	859	76.4	275	19.4	16

TABLE II

YEAR	TOTAL PART-TIME ENROLLMENT	PART-TIME ENROLLMENT FROM KANAWHA COUNTY	EQUATED FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT
1953	10	7	831
1954	124	119	906
1955	368	351	1226
1956	943	859	1698
1957	948	868	1728
1958	903	813	1899
1959	757	697	1706
1960	822	745	1619
1961	737	637	1784

According to figures released by the West Virginia Board of Education for other colleges and universities in West Virginia, more students from Kanawha County attend West Virginia State College than attend any other institution of higher education anywhere. This community, then, has accepted West Virginia State College as one of the educational institutions providing the educational backgrounds for the people that make this the kind of community which it is and which has a very bright future.

The impact of Brown then changed West Virginia State College from an institution that appealed to the national community to one that now served principally the local community, and from an all resident student body to one having a large number of part-time students. Many alumni have expressed great disenchantment with these changes. However, our appeals for help in recruiting students from other states have not been heard. Very little financial support was available for out-of-state recruitment.

The Commencement speaker for June, 1955 was Dr. W. W. Trent, State Superintendent of Schools in West Virginia. He stressed the point that Negro students should not desert West Virginia State College now that they could attend the schools for whites. You could feel the tension growing in that audience. This advice was received negatively by many in the audience. The opposition was very evident, indicating that the Superintendent, to them, was recommending continued segregation on a voluntary basis. Their interpretation was very wrong. His advice was good advice. If West Virginia State College was an excellent college before 1954 when it was all Negro, then it should continue to be an excellent institution with students of both races attending. It is quite evident that some desertion has occurred. In 1953, there were 831 full-time students--all Negroes. I have been informed upon inquiry that in September of 1983 there are 674 Black students on campus. The example that West Virginia State College has set for the state and for the nation will disappear as such unless the seeming trend is changed.

In pre-1954 days limited employment opportunities for Blacks meant limited educational programs, "deferred dreams," Langston Hughes' term that was the lot of so many. The impact of Brown in 1954 was to begin to lift the barriers to the battlefields of life for Blacks. When the newspaper reporter called me to tell me of the Supreme Court decision, I remarked that this is the greatest event

since the Magna Carta. Today I yet believe that. For as Magna Carta contained seeds of liberty brought later to fruit, so does Brown contain seeds of liberty for Blacks that can be brought to fruit. It opens to Blacks new freedoms and liberties. I emphasize the expression "opens the door." Paraphrasing John Houseman, "new freedoms, new opportunities, new challenges do not bite you on the bottom and say-we are here." . They must be seized through sound preparation and learning and adaptations to working with people of different races, colors, cultures and national origin. Many Black students have done that here at West Virginia State College. I'm sorry to say that some have remained segregated in little groups on campus refusing to extend a hand to their white compatriots here and refusing to try to develop the kinds of friendships that are so essential in this American society. Many white students have seized upon the opportunities to enlarge their views of life, to fulfill some of their yearnings. It was a deep emotional experience for me to confer degrees and hand diplomas to older white students who had found ways out of the boring, humdrum existence that had been theirs, and with the help of West Virginia State College, to secure responsible positions in teaching, in business, in religion and in many avenues of life. Those were great years.

The majority of the Black members of the faculty and staff found that they could function acceptably in the world of reason. A very few found the pressures too great and left us usually to join the staff of an all-Black institution. Students who could not cope with the atmosphere here left us for other institutions.

Once the Supreme Court decisions had been announced and with the confidence that white students would enroll here, Dean Harrison H. Ferrell and Business Manager Charles Rutherford and I conferred together, reaching the decision to reestablish evening classes on campus. The design anticipated the enrollment of

older, mature white students. These students would be taught by outstanding Black teachers establishing the quality of our educational programs. At that time, there were only two white faculty members. The outcome was as we anticipated. The faculty was praised and almost immediately younger students followed the older ones. This was the principal method of recruitment in those days.

R. B. Welch took the place of Charles Rutherford and Edwin Hoffman succeeded Harrison Ferrell in the triumvirate that directed our policy. And I was glad last night to hear Dr. Hoffman give his background, because it was when I was in South Carolina to talk to the state Negro teacher's association that I heard about him and the confrontations that he had had with the Governor of South Carolina about the disadvantages that Black teachers had in training there. And I said this is the kind of person I want on this staff. When he applied for a position in History, I persuaded him to take the position of Assistant Dean of Instruction. Now, if he's the white person who did all of the recruitment of white students and so on, then I'd say that surely he did that, but not in 1954. He came here in 1960. He wasn't Director of Recruitment; he was Assistant Dean of Instruction, and later became Dean of Instruction. He brought in members of the student body, citizens, political people and all in designing our programs here. This was the response of the community to what West Virginia State College ought to be doing.

L. T. Anderson wrote in The Charleston Gazette, September 27, 1977, a column titled, "Monument to Equality:"

> "When the Supreme Court struck down school segregation in 1954, an immediate consequence was an influx of white students at West Virginia State College.
>
> The college theretofore was a "Negro" school. When the white students enrolled, they were welcomed by a Black faculty and a Black administration and what had been a Black student body. Some of the first white students at

West Virginia State unselfconsciously flung themselves into campus life, associating themselves with the student newspaper and joining various academic and social organizations. There was some discomfort. It soon wore off.

All this took place when Charleston church congregations were either Black or white and long before the Charleston Young Men's Christian Assn., of all things, accepted its first Black member. What happened at West Virginia State College did much to spare West Virginia the foolish racial strife that erupted in other previously-segregated states. With white people flocking to a Black school, bigots were hard put to find examples of the horrors they predicted.

The reputation of West Virginia State College, already considerable among Black educators, was enhanced. The campus situation was studied by flying squads of socialists. Writers from distant places came to Institute to observe a phenomenon of the times. The school's successful melting pot experiment was written about in influential journals.

A new generation of young people finds nothing unusual about Black and white students in the same school, the result of a lesson well taught. But some older people want to forget the school's pioneering role in race relations. Some now wish to erase all visible reminders of the college's Black origins, apparently in the belief that greater community support thus would be assured.

I hope the people who helped West Virginia State College become a monument to racial equality will not allow such a thing to happen. West Virginia State's traditions are vastly more significant than those of colleges which contributed nothing but merely stood by and looked on at a time of great upheaval. The traditions should be preserved, of for no other reason, for the historical record.

Our state has little enough to brag about. But it has West Virginia State College where Black men and women gracefully taught democracy to all."

His evaluation means much to me for I was a performer in the establishment of the monument he describes. However, I hope that neither Blacks nor whites now "wish to erase all visible reminders of the college's Black origins, apparently in the belief that greater community support thus would be assured." We

need greater local support, but I hope and suggest that greater local support will result from an integrated alumni association and from the increasing appreciation of the community for the contributions of the college to the community.

The Pride and Preservation movement on campus attempts to collect materials about not only the past of the college, but the history of Black people in West Virginia. This is a necessary and commendable project.

There are some persons, and I hope that the number will dwindle, who cry great crocodile tears that West Virginia does not have a Black college. They fail to see the importance of the college to the community and to the nation as an example of racial togetherness which I believe is absolutely necessary for the attainment of the real objective.

There are yet some great challenges for West Virginia State College to accept. Important among these is continued experimentation in human relations as is invoked in the phrase which I coined, "a living laboratory of human relations."